

# Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity FY2016 Regional Innovation Strategies Program

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<b>Federal Agency Name</b>	Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)
<b>Funding Opportunity Title</b>	FY2016 Regional Innovation Strategies Program
<b>Announcement Type and Date</b>	Initial FY2016 Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) announcement publishing EDA's application submission requirements and review procedures for applications received under EDA's Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program as authorized by the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 § 27, 15 U.S.C. § 3722 (2006 & Supp. IV 2010), <i>as amended by</i> the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2014 § 705, Pub. L. No. 113-235 (Dec. 16, 2014) [hereinafter SWTIA § 27]
<b>Funding Opportunity Number</b>	EDA-HDQ-OIE-2016-2004868
<b>Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Numbers</b>	11.020 Cluster Grants
<b>Dates</b>	The deadline for receipt of applications is <b><u>11:59 P.M. EASTERN TIME ON FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2016</u></b> . Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Applications will only be accepted electronically through www.grants.gov (Grants.gov). Applicants are advised to carefully read the application and submission information provided in Section 4 of this FFO.
<b>Funding Opportunity Description</b>	<p>EDA is committed to fostering connected, innovation-centric economic sectors which support the conversion of research into products and services, businesses, and ultimately jobs through entrepreneurship. See SWTIA § 27. The DOC FY 2014-2018 Strategic Plan sets forth the strategic goal of working within and across ecosystems throughout the country to develop regional innovation strategies, including regional innovation clusters. Regional innovation strategies are a keystone of the Secretary of Commerce's commitment to building globally competitive regions. As part of this strategy, funding is available for capacity-building programs that provide proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to innovators and entrepreneurs and for operational support for organizations that provide essential early-stage funding to startups. Under the RIS Program, EDA is soliciting applications for two separate competitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the 2016 i6 Challenge; and</li> <li>• the Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grant competition.</li> </ul> <p>Applicants may, but are not required to, submit proposals for more than one competition under the RIS Program.</p>

	Note that the 2016 RIS Program is authorized under SWTIA § 27, which does not restrict the focus of grantees' projects to economically distressed communities.
<b>Eligible Applicants</b>	<p>EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals. Requests from such entities will not be considered for funding. Eligible applicants for EDA financial assistance under this FFO include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A State;</li> <li>2. An Indian tribe;</li> <li>3. A city or other political subdivision of a State;</li> <li>4. An entity that— <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. is a nonprofit organization, an institution of higher education, a public-private partnership, a science or research park, a Federal laboratory, or an economic development organization or similar entity; and</li> <li>b. has an application that is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State; or</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. A consortium of any of the entities described in subparagraphs (1) through (4).</li> </ol>
<b>Informational Webinar</b>	An informational webinar for this FFO is available for viewing at <a href="http://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/">http://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/</a> .
<b>Award Notification</b>	Subject to the availability of funding, successful applicants should expect to receive grant award notification approximately 120 days from the application closing date set forth in this FFO.

**FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT  
FY2016 REGIONAL INNOVATION STRATEGIES PROGRAM**

Executive Summary.....	i
1. Program Description.....	3
a. Overview.....	3
b. FY2016 i6 Challenge.....	3
c. Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grants.....	6
d. Statutory Authorities for the Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program.....	7
2. Federal Award Information.....	7
a. Available Funding Under this Announcement.....	7
b. Type of Funding Instrument Used; Period of Performance.....	8
3. Eligibility Information.....	8
a. Eligible Applicants.....	8
b. Cost-Sharing or Matching.....	9
4. Application and Submission Information.....	9
a. Address to Request Application Package.....	9
b. Content and Form of Application Submission.....	10
c. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM).....	13
d. Submission Dates and Times.....	14
e. Intergovernmental Review.....	14
f. Funding Restrictions.....	15
g. Other Submission Requirements.....	15
5. Application Review Information.....	17
a. Criteria.....	17
b. Review and Selection Process.....	23
6. Federal Award Administration Information.....	25
a. Federal Award Notices.....	25
b. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.....	25
c. Reporting.....	26
7. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s).....	27
8. Other Information.....	27
a. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure.....	27
b. Past Performance and Non-Compliance with Award Provisions.....	27
c. Restrictions Governing Making Grants to Corporations Convicted of Felony Criminal Violations and/or Unpaid Federal Tax Liabilities.....	27
d. EDA's Non-Relocation Policy.....	27
e. Audit Requirements.....	28
f. Environmental and Historic Preservation Requirements.....	28
g. Instructions for Application Submission via Grants.gov.....	28
Appendix A: Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law.....	33
Appendix B: Technology Readiness Levels Scale.....	34
Appendix C: Exemplary Output and Outcome Measures.....	35
1. Exemplary Output Measures:.....	35
2. Exemplary Outcome Measures:.....	35

Appendix D: Optional Checklist-Style Guide for Required Documents..... 36

- 1. For States, Indian Tribes, Cities, and Other Political Subdivisions of States ..... 36
- 2. For Nonprofit Organizations, Institutions of Higher Education, Public-Private Partnerships, Science or Research Parks, Federal Laboratories, Economic Development or Similar Organizations ..... 37

## 1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### a. Overview

This Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) announcement sets out the application submission and review procedures for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program.

Regional economic vitality is best accomplished through multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaborations that draw upon public, corporate, university, nonprofit, and philanthropic resources. Regional innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems—which have a culture of idea generation, leadership, trust, openness to forging new partnerships with disparate parties, entrepreneurial development, investment capital, and a large pool of accomplished managers—often fuel these partnerships and collaborations. Robust, sustainable regional innovation ecosystems help drive national competitiveness.

EDA is committed to fostering connected, innovation-centric economic sectors which support commercialization and entrepreneurship as described in the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 § 27, 15 U.S.C. § 3722 (2006 & Supp. IV 2010), *as amended by* the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2014 § 705, Pub. L. No. 113-235 (Dec. 16, 2014) [hereinafter SWTIA § 27]. The Department of Commerce (DOC) FY 2014-2018 Strategic Plan sets forth the strategic goal of working within and across ecosystems throughout the country to develop regional innovation strategies, including regional innovation clusters. The realization of this goal requires building public and private capacity to invent, improve, and commercialize new products and services. Regional innovation strategies are a keystone of the Secretary of Commerce's commitment to building globally competitive regions.

As part of this strategy, funding is available for capacity-building programs that provide proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to innovators and entrepreneurs and for operational support for organizations that provide essential early-stage funding to startups. Under the RIS Program, EDA is soliciting applications for two separate competitions:

- the 2016 i6 Challenge; and
- the Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grant competition.

Applicants may, but are not required to, submit proposals for more than one competition under the RIS Program.

Note that while many grants and competitions administered by EDA are governed by the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 3121 *et seq.* [hereinafter PWEDA], the authorization for the 2016 RIS Program is provided under SWTIA § 27, which does not restrict the focus of grantees' projects to economically distressed communities.

### b. FY2016 i6 Challenge

The i6 Challenge is a leading national program designed to increase entrepreneurship that results in new jobs and businesses, driven by innovations, ideas, intellectual property, and applied research through the process of technology commercialization.

Proof-of-concept and commercialization programs can be physical or virtual, existing or new. Existing programs need not have previously received EDA funds to be considered for this award. Pursuant to SWTIA § 27, i6 Challenge funding may be used for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to personnel, program development, and equipment; however, construction costs are not eligible. For further details regarding funding restrictions see Section 4(f) of this FFO.

## **i. Proof-of-Concept and Commercialization Programs**

### **A. Proof-of-Concept Programs**

Proof-of-concept programs work with very early stage innovations, ideas, intellectual property, and research to provide documented evidence that a product or service can be successful. These programs typically work with innovations that span Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs)<sup>1</sup> 1 (i.e., conception) to 6 and consider not only technology viability (i.e., seeking to answer whether this *can* be done) but also market potential and financial viability (i.e., seeking to answer whether this *should* be done).

### **B. Commercialization Programs**

Commercialization programs work with later stage innovations, ideas, intellectual property, and research to complete and refine innovations from TRLs 3 to 6 (including post-proof-of-concept) and fine-tune their market opportunities while supporting the steps toward becoming viable or expanded businesses.

## **ii. Strategies and Goals of Proof-of-Concept and Commercialization Programs**

Proof-of-concept and commercialization programs—including former RIS Program and i6 grantees<sup>2</sup>—function as critical nodes for translating cutting-edge innovation into high-growth entrepreneurship in their regions. They offer a range of programs and services that support innovation-based, high growth entrepreneurship and startup acceleration through services such as technology advisement, market evaluation, business planning, mentorship, and access to early stage capital. The most successful programs leverage the experiences of successful entrepreneurs and business executives and strive to foster communities with mindsets for and cultures of innovation.

EDA expects to fund proposals that create or expand innovative proof-of-concept and commercialization capabilities that in turn will develop regional capacity to create high-growth entrepreneurial ventures consistently and regularly and that will contribute to economic growth and competitiveness in the United States. Applicants must demonstrate how they will leverage regional strengths, capabilities, and competitive advantages. Applications should avoid any duplication of existing or budgeted efforts. EDA will prioritize i6 Challenge funds to proposals that bring to or significantly enhance in their regions a culture of innovation and high-growth entrepreneurship.

## **iii. Requirements for i6 Challenge Participants**

The i6 Challenge will provide funding to invest in the development, creation, or expansion of proof-of-concept and commercialization programs that accelerate innovation-led economic development in pursuit of a vibrant innovative economy and economic growth. These programs can be physical or virtual, existing or new. Existing programs need not have previously received EDA funds to be considered for this award. However, while entities that have *completed* the performance period of a previous i6 Challenge grant (which are awarded with an initial performance period of three years) **are** eligible, entities that are or plan to be operating *within* the performance period of a previously-awarded i6 Challenge grant at the time of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) are a standardized system, categorizing the status of a technology innovation and its readiness for commercialization. The definitions of the TRLs used by EDA for the purposes of this FFO can be found in Appendix D of this FFO. Other TRL definitions include those developed by the Department of Defense, see <http://www.acq.osd.mil/chieftechologist/publications/docs/TRA2011.pdf>, by the Department of Energy, see <https://www.directives.doe.gov/directives-documents/400-series/0413.3-EGuide-04a>, and by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, see, e.g., <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codeq/trl/trl.pdf>, [http://esto.nasa.gov/files/trl\\_definitions.pdf](http://esto.nasa.gov/files/trl_definitions.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/i6/> (linking to information about, including lists of grantees of, the RIS Program and the i6 Challenge).

award of a grant under this FFO **are not** eligible. To be eligible for an i6 Challenge grant, a proposed project must focus on driving economic development by building capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship, thereby enabling individuals, firms, and communities to achieve greater prosperity and quality of life. Specifically, proposed projects should aim for a subset of the following outputs, as appropriate in light of each given proposed project's regional, sectoral, and cultural contexts:

#### ***A. Innovation***

Projects that develop cultures of innovation and the resources necessary to drive innovations from ideas to research and intellectual property by:

- Creating a broad-based, expansive culture of idea generation and identifying useful applications of resulting innovations, including converting research and development at universities and research centers into commercially viable enterprises;
- Engaging an inclusive set of researchers, innovators, and practitioners that support commercialization of inventions, ideas, or research; and
- Exposing industry professionals, investors, and successful entrepreneurs to innovations at their earliest stages in order to create the best climate, team, and opportunities for an emerging, high-growth startup or for the acceleration of an existing startup.

#### ***B. Entrepreneurship***

Projects that develop a large number of high-growth entrepreneurs within a region and that create an ecosystem in which those entrepreneurs can experiment with and can create businesses and jobs from their innovations by:

- Supporting educational programs or work experiences to prepare students<sup>3</sup> and researchers for entrepreneurial challenges and work environments; and
- Growing innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems to ensure a steady stream of high-growth startups that drive job and value creation in the primary service area, community, and region.

#### ***C. Regional Connectivity***

Projects that connect the community of economic development and commercialization resources by:

- Hosting special events to showcase inventions, ideas, research, technologies, and entrepreneurs to promote the exchange of ideas that leads to the formation of new collaborations and ultimately to the commercialization of innovations;
- Forging new and reinforcing existing relationships among an inclusive group of regional stakeholders; and
- Engaging local business associations and governments to ensure that high growth entrepreneurs and companies are more fully integrated into the local business community and that their growing needs are addressed by a robust support network that includes specialized and readily-accessed technical assistance and access to capital, business associations, and government officials.

#### ***D. Commercialization of Research***

Projects that convert ideas, research, or prototypes into viable products and services that can be brought to market by new or existing businesses in a financially manageable and rapid manner by:

---

<sup>3</sup> A student is defined as an individual enrolled in an accredited class or program. This definition includes, but is not limited to, individuals enrolled at colleges, at universities, and in non-degree granting programs.

- Providing access to mentors, industry catalysts, and entrepreneurs-in-residence that provide advisory services and that link technology and researchers to external networks;
- Identifying access to seed funding to support the commercialization of promising research;
- Assisting with market evaluation, business planning, and business opportunity articulation; and
- Creating of processes that integrate scientific review with market potential to greatly accelerate the best ideas from lab to market.

#### iv. i6 Challenge Examples

Links to descriptions of past recipients can be found via <https://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/>. Please note that these scenarios are informational only and are intended to provide applicants with a clearer picture of how the i6 Challenge is intended to function. **THESE EXAMPLES IN NO WAY LIMIT THE RANGE OF POTENTIAL PROPOSED PROJECTS, COMBINATIONS OF ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS, OR ANCHORING ORGANIZATIONS; EDA WELCOMES INNOVATIVE PROPOSALS.**

#### c. Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grants

The availability of funding for early-stage companies is an essential element of a healthy innovation-based regional ecosystem. Taking an idea or innovation from conception to market often requires capital, but in many regions across the country, innovators and entrepreneurs struggle to find that capital.

EDA plans to provide funding for technical assistance and operational costs that support the feasibility, planning, formation, launch, or scale of cluster-based seed funds that will invest their capital in innovation-based startups with a potential for high growth. For the purposes of this FFO, a seed fund is an equity-based investment fund that generally focuses on companies less than three years old and with annual revenues under \$1 million and that is operated by professional fund managers. These managers develop an investment strategy, capitalize the fund with investment capital from one or more institutions or individuals, and deploy the investment capital by funding early-stage companies in exchange for equity stakes in those portfolio companies. Seed funds sustain their operations through those equity stakes as their portfolio companies increase in value and are acquired, conduct an initial public offering (IPO), or otherwise realize a cash return on that equity.

EDA funds cannot capitalize a seed fund (i.e., EDA funds and matching funds cannot be used to invest in startups or any other companies). The technical assistance and operational costs funded by EDA can jumpstart the creation or expansion of a seed fund by funding operations to capitalize a fund, to market the fund to potential startups and investors, to educate potential seed fund investors about seed fund investing, or to evaluate potential investments in startup companies.

While the Small Business Administration's (SBA's) Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program funds ultimately pass to startup companies, funding awarded through the SFS Grants will instead seek to create sustainable institutions for financing startups. Applicants may request funding to support seed funds and programs providing support directly to such funds. EDA will collaborate with SBA during the merit review process to evaluate the extent to which a SFS Grant applicant's proposed project or program complements other Federal economic development programs in order to avoid the duplication of existing programs.

Seed funds may be existing or new; existing funds need not have previously received EDA funds to be considered for this award. Pursuant to SWTIA § 27, SFS Grant funding may be used for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to personnel, program development, and equipment; however, construction costs are not eligible. For further details regarding funding restrictions see Section 4(f) of this FFO.

### i. Requirements for Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grants

The SFS Grants competition will provide funding for technical assistance, feasibility studies, or marketing related to the operation of new or existing equity-based seed funds. Although entities that have *completed* the performance period of a previous SFS grant (which are awarded with an initial performance period of two years) **are** eligible, entities that are, or plan to be, operating *within* the performance period of a previously-awarded SFS grant at the time of the award of a grant under this FFO **are not** eligible. To be eligible for an SFS grant, a proposed project must focus on driving economic development by building capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship, which thereby, enables individuals, firms, and communities to achieve greater prosperity and quality of life. Specifically, proposed seed fund projects should aim for a subset of the following outputs, as appropriate in light of each given proposed project's regional, sectoral, and cultural contexts:

#### A. *Early-Stage Capital Support for Innovation-Based, Growth-Oriented Companies*

Seed funds must focus on equity-based investments in new businesses (generally less than three years old with under \$1 million in annual revenue) that are commercializing or using innovative technologies or other intellectual property in the development or delivery of their products or services. The businesses must also have demonstrated potential for high-growth and include performance targets for job creation.

#### B. *Plan for Sustainability*

Seed funds must include sustainability plans based on taking equity stakes in the businesses in which the program invests.

#### C. *Demonstrated Ecosystem and Downstream Support*

Seed funds must build and maintain ties into the community—a critical element of success for nascent companies—through connections to support organizations such as commercialization centers, incubators, and other training programs. Additionally important are connections with downstream funding sources to support the capital needs of portfolio companies as they scale up and grow.

### ii. Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grants Examples

Links to descriptions of past recipients can be found via <https://www.eda.gov/oie/ris/>. Please note that these scenarios are informational only and are intended to provide applicants with a clearer picture of how this opportunity is intended to function. **THESE EXAMPLES IN NO WAY LIMIT THE RANGE OF POTENTIAL PROPOSED PROJECTS, COMBINATIONS OF ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS, OR ANCHORING ORGANIZATIONS; EDA WELCOMES INNOVATIVE PROPOSALS.**

#### d. **Statutory Authorities for the Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program**

The statutory authority for the RIS Program is SWITA § 27.

## 2. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

### a. **Available Funding Under this Announcement**

The funding periods and funding amounts referenced in this notice are subject to the availability of funds at the time of award<sup>4</sup>, as well as to DOC and EDA priorities at the time of award. Neither DOC nor EDA will be held responsible for application preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not obligate

---

<sup>4</sup> In Fiscal Year 2016, EDA was appropriated \$15 million for grants authorized by SWITA § 27 pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, Pub. L. No. 114-113, Division B, Title I (Dec. 18, 2015).

DOC or EDA to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds. Subject to the availability of funding, EDA expects to allocate funds as follows:

**i. FY2016 i6 Challenge**

Approximately \$13,000,000 for the FY2016 i6 Challenge, from which EDA expects to award approximately 26 or more grants, each valued at a maximum of \$500,000.

**ii. Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grants**

Approximately \$2,000,000 for SFS Grants, from which EDA expects to award approximately 8 or more grants, each valued at a maximum of \$250,000.

**b. Type of Funding Instrument Used; Period of Performance**

Subject to the availability of funds, EDA may award grants to eligible applicants to help support activities.

Periods of performance are dependent on the type of project, the scope of work, and the EDA program under which the grant for the project is awarded. See Section 6(a) of this FFO for award notification information.

- For the i6 Challenge, the anticipated award will have an initial period of performance of three years with an estimated start date on or about 30 days after EDA makes the award.
- For the SFS Grants competition, the anticipated award will have an initial period of performance of two years with an estimated start date on or about 30 days after EDA makes the award.

EDA expects all projects to proceed efficiently and expeditiously, and EDA expects applicants to clearly document in their applications a reasonable and appropriate timeline that includes the start and completion dates of the proposed scope of work.

**3. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

**a. Eligible Applicants**

EDA is **not** authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals, and such requests will not be considered for funding.

Pursuant to SWTIA § 27, eligible applicants for and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance under this FFO include:

- A State;
- An Indian tribe;
- A city or other political subdivision of a State;
- An entity that—
  - is a nonprofit organization, an institution of higher education, a public-private partnership, a science or research park, a Federal laboratory, or an economic development organization or similar entity; and
  - has an application that is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State; or
- A consortium of any of the immediately aforementioned entities.

Please note that, in evaluating applications, EDA will provide preference to organizations and consortia that demonstrate regional collaboration and the ability to leverage and complement existing state, local, and nonprofit organization programs and initiatives that support innovation- and entrepreneurship-based economic development.

## b. Cost-Sharing or Matching

Under this FFO, applicants must demonstrate **AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION** a matching share from non-Federal<sup>5</sup> sources. **Applicants must show, by submitting from each non-Federal source of matching share a commitment letter or equivalent document signed by an authorized representative, that matching shares will: (i) be **COMMITTED** to the project for the period of performance, (ii) be **AVAILABLE** as needed, and (iii) **NOT BE CONDITIONED OR ENCUMBERED** in any way that may preclude its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance.** EDA may give preference to applications with higher matching shares where there are clear and reasonable justifications as to how the higher matching share will be used to further leverage Federal funds and to help ensure additional project impact. Under this FFO, a separate match is required for each submitted application. For all competitions, **the amount of an EDA grant may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of each project.**

In the application review process, EDA will consider the nature of the contribution (cash or in-kind) and the amount of the matching share funds. In-kind contributions may provide the required non-Federal share of the total project cost and can consist of contributions directly related to the proposed project, such as space, equipment, or services. EDA will fairly evaluate all in-kind contributions, which must be eligible project costs and meet applicable Federal cost principles and uniform administrative requirements.<sup>6</sup>

Applicants are **STRONGLY** encouraged to work with the appropriate EDA representative listed in Section 7 of this FFO to determine how in-kind contributions may be utilized to satisfy the matching share requirement based upon the project concept and application. **Please note that all project funds—both Federal funds and matching funds—are subject to certain restrictions. In particular for these competitions, **NEITHER FEDERAL NOR MATCHING SHARE FUNDS CAN BE USED AS VENTURE CAPITAL OR AS AN EQUITY INVESTMENT**; therefore, the matching share **MUST NOT** include funds to be invested in startups or other companies. Additionally for these competitions, neither Federal nor matching share funds can be used for construction activities. See Section 4(f) of this FFO.**

## 4. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### a. Address to Request Application Package

An applicant may obtain the appropriate application package electronically at <http://www.grants.gov/> (Grants.gov). Applicants may search for this funding opportunity on Grants.gov using Funding Opportunity Number “EDA-HDQ-OIE-2016-2004868.” All components of the appropriate application package may be accessed and downloaded at [www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html). The preferred electronic file format for attachments is Adobe portable document format (PDF); however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Microsoft Excel. Alternatively, an applicant eligible for assistance under this announcement may request a paper application package by contacting EDA’s Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (OIE) via email at [oie@eda.gov](mailto:oie@eda.gov), via phone at (202) 482-8001, or via mail addressed to 1401 Constitution Ave NW Rm 78018, Washington, DC, 20230. **APPLICANTS ARE ADVISED THAT THEY MUST COMPLETE THE REGISTRATION PROCESS PRIOR TO SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION THROUGH GRANTS.GOV**; however, registration is not required for applicants to access, view, or download the application package. Even though an applicant may be able to view and download an application, **IF THE APPLICANT HAS NOT CORRECTLY COMPLETED THE GRANTS.GOV REGISTRATION PROCESS THE APPLICANT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SUBMIT THE**

---

<sup>5</sup> Funds from other Federal financial assistance awards are considered matching share funds only if authorized by statute, which may be determined by EDA’s reasonable interpretation of the statute.

<sup>6</sup> See 2 C.F.R. § 200.306.

**APPLICATION FOR EDA'S REVIEW**. See Sections 4(b), 4(c), and 8(g) of this FFO for details of the Grants.gov registration process.

**b. Content and Form of Application Submission**

**i. What Is Required for a Complete Application?**

In order to be considered for funding, applicants **MUST SUBMIT A COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKAGE** for each competition to which they are applying that **INCLUDES ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS OUTLINED BELOW** by the applicable deadline. All documentation and data submitted as part of the application package should be current and applicable.

All applications **MUST** include the following documents:

1. One **Form SF-424** (Application for Federal Assistance) **FROM EACH APPLICANT OR CO-APPLICANT**;
2. One **Form SF-424A** (Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs) **per application** (applicants should ensure that the SF-424A reflects a distinct budget for each competition for which the applicant is applying);
3. One **Form SF-424B** (Assurances-Non-Construction Programs) **FROM EACH APPLICANT OR CO-APPLICANT**;
4. One **Form CD-511** (Certification Regarding Lobbying) **FROM EACH APPLICANT OR CO-APPLICANT**;
5. One **Form SF-LLL** (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) **FROM EACH APPLICANT OR CO-APPLICANT**;
6. One **Project Narrative per application** of no more than 10 single-sided pages using one of Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman of size no less than 11 points (see Section 4(b)(iii) of this FFO for additional information);
7. **Résumés**, each of no more than 2 single-sided pages, using one of Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman of size no less than 11 points for all key personnel;
8. One **Budget Narrative**, which contains a **staffing plan, per application** of no more than three (3) single-sided pages using one of Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman of size no less than 11 points (see Section 4(b)(iv) of this FFO for additional information; **note that commitment letters, see item 9 below, DO NOT count toward this page limit**);
9. **Commitment letters or equivalent documents** that demonstrate that **ALL MATCHING FUNDS** (whether cash or in-kind) referenced in the SF-424, SF-424A, the Project and Budget Narratives, and elsewhere in the application will be **UNENCUMBERED, UNRESTRICTED, AND COMMITTED AT THE TIME OF AWARD** and that are **SIGNED BY AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES**<sup>7</sup> of the applicant, co-applicants, or third-party organizations providing the matching funds;

---

<sup>7</sup> Such authorized representatives must have the authority to execute documents and obligate and expend funds on behalf of the respective organization.

10. Documentation demonstrating compliance with **Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs,”** if applicable<sup>8</sup>. See Section 4(e) of this FFO and [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc).
11. **If the applicant or co-applicant is a NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION, an INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION<sup>9</sup>, a PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP, a SCIENCE OR RESEARCH PARK, a FEDERAL LABORATORY, or an ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION OR SIMILAR ENTITY**, in addition to the documents required above, **EACH APPLICANT OR CO-APPLICANT** must provide a copy of:
  - a. The **certificate of good standing** less than 12 months old from the State in which the entity or entities are incorporated;
  - b. The current **articles of incorporation** or other formation documents of the entity or entities;
  - c. The **bylaws** of the entity or entities; **AND**
  - d. One or more **resolutions (or letters)** that demonstrate that the applicant’s or co-applicants’ application is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State (e.g., a county, a municipality) that is relevant to the proposed projects or programs.
12. A copy of each applicant’s or co-applicant’s **current, approved Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreement**, where applicable. See Section 4(b)(ii).

All application forms submitted through Grants.gov **MUST BE SIGNED ELECTRONICALLY BY AN AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE (AOR)**; please see Section 4(g)(ii) of this FFO for information on AOR requirements.<sup>10</sup> Please also refer to important information on submitting your application provided in Sections 4(d) and (g) of this FFO.

**ii. Copy of Current, Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement**

If facilities and administrative costs (sometimes referred to as indirect costs) are included in the budget, the applicant must include a copy of its current Facilities and Administrative Cost Rate Agreement or documentation establishing that it has a pending application. An applicant that does not have a current Facilities and Administrative Cost Rate Agreement negotiated and approved by the Department of Commerce (or by the applicable cognizant Federal agency) may propose facilities and administrative costs in its budget. However, the applicant must prepare and submit a facilities and administrative cost allocation

<sup>8</sup> Only certain States participate in the intergovernmental review process; the current list of these States and their respective Single Points of Contact (SPOC) can be found at [https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc](https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc). Each State may choose to participate in this process for all or a subset of federal grant programs. EDA strongly encourages applicants to contact their respective SPOCs early in this FFO’s application period in order to determine the relevant State’s process and the requirements thereof. Based on the applicant’s State, EDA requires the following documentation:

State does not participate	No documentation required
State participates; this grant program not subject to review	Documentation (e.g., a State executive order, a signed letter from the SPOC) showing that this grant program is not subject to review
State participates; this grant program subject to review	Documentation (e.g., a signed letter from the SPOC) with comments or indicating that this project was not selected for review, or, if the comment period has expired or comments were not received, a copy of the applicant’s request for comments

<sup>9</sup> EDA has determined that institutes of higher-education that are completely (i.e., 100%) controlled by a State government are not required to submit separate and distinct documentation of support by a State or political subdivision thereof. Institutes of higher education that are not 100% controlled by a State government (e.g., private universities, for-profit colleges), however, are eligible as institutions of higher education and therefore must demonstrate support of a State or a political subdivision thereof and must submit the documentation set forth in Section 4(b)(i)(11) of this FFO.

<sup>10</sup> The AOR must be a person who has the authority to execute documents on behalf of the legal entity making application. See Section 4(g)(ii) of this FFO.

plan and rate proposal or a negotiated indirect cost rate as required by 2 C.F.R. Part 200 “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.” The allocation plan and the rate proposal must be submitted to EDA’s Office of Regional Affairs (or applicable cognizant Federal agency) within ninety days from the award start date.

The maximum dollar amount of allocable facilities and administrative costs for which EDA will reimburse a recipient shall be the lesser of the: (i) line-item amount for the Federal share of facilities and administrative costs contained in the EDA approved budget for the award, or (ii) Federal share of the total allocable facilities and administrative costs of the award based on the cost rate approved by EDA (or applicable cognizant Federal agency), provided that the cost rate is current at the time the costs were incurred and provided that the rate is approved on or before the award end date. The applicant should include a statement in its budget narrative if the applicant does not have, or has not applied for, a Facilities and Administrative Cost Rate Agreement.

In addition, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), any non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in Paragraph D.1.b of Appendix VII to 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (specifically, a governmental department or agency that receives more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding), may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs.

### iii. Project Narrative Requirements

As outlined in Section 4(b)(iii) of this FFO, all applicants must provide a project narrative in order to be considered for funding. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a clear and concise narrative that includes a compelling justification for the project and articulates a clearly defined regional economic gap, how the proposed project will uniquely meet this need, and the expected outcome(s) that will result from the proposed project. This should be addressed in a concise manner; lengthy applications will not receive greater consideration. Note that the project narrative and budget narrative are separate documents with different technical requirements and should be submitted separately. See Section 4(b) of this FFO. A competitive application will address the following elements in the project narrative:

#### A. Description of Project Region, Location, and Impact

Applicants must clearly describe the region where the project will be located, including the specific geographic location of the project within the region, as well as background on the assets of the area, which may include clusters, workforce, and physical, educational, and financial infrastructure. If the impact is expected to expand beyond the noted region, that should be detailed as well.

#### 1. Primary Service Areas

Applicants must explicitly identify their proposed programs’ or projects’ primary service area(s) by county or county equivalent (collectively, “counties”) and must show a concrete plan to benefit innovators and entrepreneurs in the primary service area(s). The counties that make up an application’s proposed programs’ or projects’ primary service area(s) should be identified **both** by name and by their respective 5-digit FIPS codes<sup>11</sup> (e.g., the FIPS code of Marion County, AL, is 01093; of Park County, MT, is 30067; and of Alexandria, VA—an independent city and thus a county equivalent—is 51510).

---

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., <http://www.census.gov/geo/reference/codes/cou.html> (providing access to FIPS codes for counties and county equivalents).

## ***B. Clear Description of Proposed Project***

Applicants must clearly document the concrete activities that will be undertaken, and the specific deliverables that will be produced as a result of the proposed project. The description of the proposed project must include (i) a clear statement of the overall purpose of the project; (ii) the role of each applicant, co-applicant, and key personnel (including brief descriptions of their qualifications that are substantiated by each key person's accompanying résumé); (iii) key milestones along with an estimated project start date (or range), estimated completion dates for key milestones, and an estimated project completion date; and (iv) a scope of work, no longer than one page, for the proposed project. For clarity and conciseness, it is suggested that applications include a detailed list- or bullet-style scope of work as part of the description of the proposed project.

## ***C. Documentation of Anticipated Project Impacts***

Applicants must provide a clear and compelling justification of the long-term potential economic impact of the proposed project by including metrics (e.g., anticipated job creation or retention, anticipated private investment leveraged, anticipated number of businesses or collaborations supported, and other appropriate measures; see Appendix C of this FFO). All impact estimates, including but not limited to job and private investment leverage estimates, should reflect the anticipated impact at the end of the grant performance period, two years after the end of the grant performance period, and five years after the end of the grant performance period. In all cases, applicants must **document the benefit, provide third-party data or information** to support these claims, and **include practical and clear tracking and reporting mechanisms** for metrics that will measure the economic impact during and after the project.

### **iv. Budget Narrative and Supporting Documentation Requirements**

Applicants must provide a clear budget narrative that identifies and justifies how funds in each line item of the budget will be used to support the proposed project. The budget narrative should include itemized valuations of any in-kind matching funds (which, for personnel costs, should be supported by the staffing plan). The non-Federal share, whether in cash or in-kind, is expected to be paid out at the same general rate as the Federal share; however, if the applicant's budget narrative proposes otherwise, applicants must also include information that clearly indicates what project elements the matching share funds will support. Finally, **the applicant must submit supporting documentation to indicate these funds will be UNENCUMBERED, UNRESTRICTED, and COMMITTED at the time of award to support the proposed project.** For page limits and other technical requirements, see Section 4(b) of this FFO.

### **c. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)**

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to the extent applicable, applicants are required to: (i) be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. EDA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the EDA is ready to make an award, EDA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. Recipients will be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. Parts 25 and 170 (2015). The guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. Part 25 may be located at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2015-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2015-title2-vol1-part25.pdf>, and the guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. Part 170 may be located at

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2015-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2015-title2-vol1-part170.pdf>. Note that SAM now encompasses the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), and that the unique entity identifier is commonly the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number.

#### d. Submission Dates and Times

The closing date for receipt of applications for funding under this FFO is **FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2016**.

Applications submitted electronically via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (Grants.gov) must be received by **11:59 P.M. EASTERN TIME** on **FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2016**. **THE DATE AND TIME THAT AN APPLICATION WILL BE DEEMED TO BE ELECTRONICALLY RECEIVED WILL BE DETERMINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED AT GRANTS.GOV FOR THIS FFO.** See Sections 4(d) and 8(g) of this FFO for information regarding electronic submissions. **APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE CLOSING DATE AND TIME WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING.**

In addition, please note the following:

- EDA **WILL NOT ACCEPT** any unsolicited changes, additions, revisions, or deletions to applications after the submission deadline.
- Throughout the review and selection process, EDA reserves the right to seek clarification in writing from applicants whose applications are being reviewed and considered.
- Applicants may be asked to clarify objectives and work plans and modify budgets or other specifics as necessary to comply with Federal requirements and provide supplemental information required by the agency before award.
- See Section 5 of this FFO for application review and selection information.

**APPLICANTS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO START EARLY AND NOT TO WAIT UNTIL NEAR THE APPLICATION DEADLINE BEFORE LOGGING ON AND REVIEWING THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION THROUGH GRANTS.GOV.** Applicants should **SAVE AND PRINT WRITTEN PROOF** of an electronic submission made at Grants.gov.

#### i. Systems Issues

If problems occur while using Grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call Grants.gov at (800) 518-4726 for immediate assistance. EDA, in its sole discretion, may **pre-approve in writing** submission via an alternate method (e.g., email) due to a systems issue at Grants.gov **only insofar as any such systems issue is beyond the control of the applicant; however, any submission via this alternate method must be received before the deadline.** See Section 4(d)(i) regarding what does and does not constitute a systems issue. **LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** for any reason, including but not limited to late submissions caused by issues with Grants.gov, SAM, or AOR registrations. See Sections 4(d) and 8(g) of this FFO for more information on electronic submissions.

In situations described in this subsection, applications must have email or facsimile receipt timestamps no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline listed in Section 4(d) of this FFO or must be postmarked or the equivalent on or before a date no later than the deadline listed in Section 4(g)(i) of this FFO. **An application that is not timestamped or postmarked, as applicable, by the deadline WILL NOT BE REVIEWED.**

#### e. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted under this FFO are subject to the requirements of Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," if a State has adopted a process under EO 12372 to

review and coordinate proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development (commonly referred to as the “single point of contact review process”). All applicants must give State and local governments a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the proposed Project, including review and comment from area-wide planning organizations in metropolitan areas.<sup>12</sup> To find out more about a State’s process under EO 12372, applicants may contact their State’s Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Names and addresses of some States’ SPOCs are listed on the Office of Management and Budget’s home page at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc). Question 19 of Form SF-424 allows applicants to demonstrate compliance with EO 12372; however, note that applicants must supply as part of their application packages documentation that supports the answer provided to Question 19. See Section 4(b)(i)(10) and footnote 8.

#### f. Funding Restrictions

Construction activities are not allowable costs under either competition and may not be charged to the EDA funds of the project or provided as matching share. For the proposes of an award made pursuant to this FFO, construction includes any activity, including the installation of equipment, that disturbs the ground or modifies a structure. Additionally, the use of funds for venture capital or equity investments is not an allowable cost and neither EDA funds nor matching share may be used for such purposes.

#### g. Other Submission Requirements

##### i. Means of Submission

**APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED THROUGH GRANTS.GOV.** EDA will not accept paper, facsimile, or email transmissions of applications for this program except in cases of documented systems issues as described in Sections 4(e)(i) and 8(g)(v) of this FFO. Applications must be successfully validated and timestamped by Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the date of the deadline listed in Section 4(d) of this FFO. **An application that is not validated and timestamped by Grants.gov by the deadline WILL NOT BE REVIEWED.** Note that the Grants.gov registration is a multi-stage process that involves a number of steps, including validation, verification, and registration through other websites such as sam.gov. See Sections 4(a), 4(d), and 4(g)(ii) of this FFO. Please visit <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-tools-and-tips.html> for resources and guides on the Grants.gov registration process.

Once an application is submitted, it undergoes a validation process through Grants.gov during which the application may be accepted or rejected by the system. **Please be advised that the validation process may take 24 TO 48 hours to complete. Applications that contain errors will be rejected by Grants.gov, and will not be forwarded to EDA for review. The applicant must correct the error before Grants.gov will accept and validate the application. EDA WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE APPLICATIONS THAT WERE REJECTED BY GRANTS.GOV DUE TO APPLICANT ERRORS. Accordingly, EDA STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT APPLICANTS SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATIONS AT LEAST FIVE (5) DAYS BEFORE THE DEADLINE to allow the application to be accepted and validated in the system and to allow time for any errors to be corrected. EDA will consider the timestamp on the validation from Grants.gov (or on a pre-approved alternate method) as the official submission time.**

Please see Section 8(g) of this FFO for more detailed instructions and information on the requirements for submitting applications electronically via Grants.gov.

---

<sup>12</sup> As provided for in 15 C.F.R. Part 13.

## ii. Pre-Submission Registration

Before applying to a competition under this FFO, each applicant must both register its organization with Grants.gov; and register its Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) with Grants.gov.



Many applicants may have already completed one or more of the above steps set forth in the above flowchart, which depicts an example of how the pre-submission registration process generally flows. However, e.g., organizations may have already registered with Grants.gov, in which case they do not need to re-register. However, note that **applicant organizations that have not completed any of the above steps may require 23 OR MORE BUSINESS DAYS to complete the required steps serially; this process may take some applicants fifty percent (50%) or more of this FFO's application period.** EDA **STRONGLY ENCOURAGES** prospective applicants to begin the pre-submission process as early as possible in the application period. Grants.gov is a centrally-managed Federal grants portal, and changes or updates to the process outlined above may occur after the publication of this FFO. Prospective applicants should visit <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html> to ensure that they follow the most up-to-date instructions.

## iii. Optional Pre-Submission Technical Review

Applicants may submit a copy of their application and receive feedback on their application before the deadline.<sup>13</sup> Applicants who submit complete applications for pre-submission technical review will be informed whether their application is technically complete (i.e., if it includes all the documents required by Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO) and whether the applicant is an eligible entity—i.e., whether or not EDA would forward the application in its current state to a Merit Review Panel. No other review will be conducted and no additional feedback (including, e.g., feedback on the application's merits) will be provided. Additionally, during the application period of this FFO, EDA cannot provide comments or any other feedback on applications that were submitted under any preceding RIS or i6 Challenge FFOs, whether or not they were

<sup>13</sup> Ineligible applicants will be informed that they are ineligible for EDA funding. Please see Section 3(a) of this FFO for eligibility requirements.

selected for funding. Based on this feedback, the applicant may revise or supplement the application or submit a substantially revised application by the deadline.

Pre-submission technical review is designed **ONLY** to provide feedback on the technical completeness of an application and the applicant's eligibility for funding, and is **NOT** designed to provide any review or feedback of an application's merits or to provide assistance in the development of an application. EDA staff will attempt to provide pre-submission technical review within two weeks of receipt of a request therefor; however, such review is not guaranteed, may not be comprehensive, and does not guarantee or suggest that the final submitted application will be forwarded to a Merit Review Panel or selected for funding.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek this technical feedback from EDA no later than three (3) weeks prior to the application deadline set forth in Section 4(g)(iii) of this FFO in order to allow adequate time to address any technical issues before final submission. The review and feedback described in this subsection are optional. Applicants need not seek preliminary feedback on their application in order to submit an application for consideration. Please see Section 7 of this FFO for contact information for EDA representatives.

## **5. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

Throughout the review and selection process, EDA reserves the right to seek clarification in writing from applicants whose applications are being reviewed and considered. EDA may ask applicants to clarify application materials, objectives, and work plans, or modify budgets or other specifics as necessary to comply with Federal requirements.

### **a. Criteria**

For each program, the following factors will be considered by members of the Merit Review Panels to judge applications. Evaluation criteria for each program will be scored independently. Applicants that apply for multiple competitions under this FFO may not necessarily receive favorable consideration for each competition. Each factor will be weighted as indicated for a total possible score of 100 points under each competition.

#### **i. FY2016 i6 Challenge Grants**

All applications will be evaluated against the i6 Challenge evaluation criteria set forth below. EDA will consider applications that include data (including performance measures and deliverables, as applicable) that support the assertions made in the Project Narrative more competitive than those that do not include such supporting data.

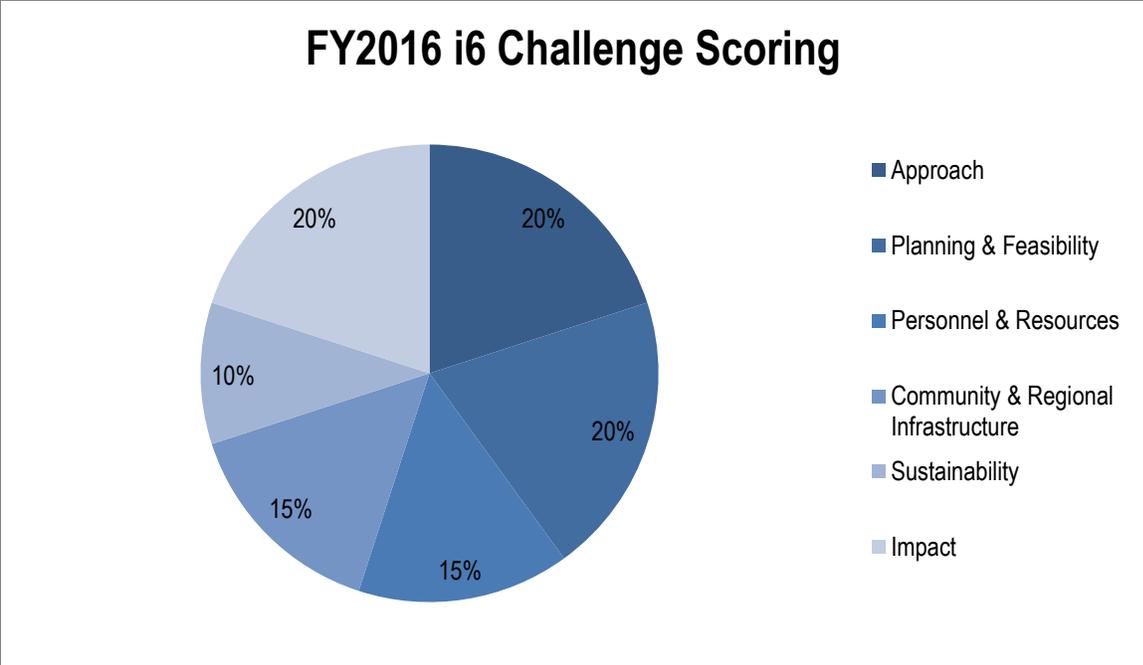


Figure 5-1: FY2016 i6 Challenge Scoring

**A. Approach (20 Points)**

Applications will be evaluated based on their plan to effectively use the proposed project as described in Section 1(b) of this FFO to address their regional innovation and entrepreneurial needs. Moreover, the application should present a clear, specific, and realistic approach to accelerating the movement of innovative ideas to the marketplace, such as innovation in the areas of energy, life sciences, information technology, health care, education, innovative manufacturing, telecommunications or social innovation. This will be evaluated to the extent an application demonstrates:

- A clear understanding of a real, persistent problem that is faced by or an unaddressed opportunity that could positively affect the region’s entrepreneurs and innovators and the ability of the proposed projects or programs to solve that problem;
- The timeliness or urgency of the problem or opportunity;
- The creativity or transformational potential of the projects or programs, the role and benefit of the proposed projects or programs with respect to the problem or opportunity, and the best practices on which the proposed projects or programs are based;
- A clear linkage between the proposed projects’ or programs’ activities that create or increase capacity for innovation, entrepreneurship, and the commercialization of ideas and documented, task-oriented milestones; and
- An understanding of the region’s populations that are underrepresented in innovation and entrepreneurship in the proposed primary service area and the ability of the programs or projects to reach and include those underrepresented populations.

**B. Planning & Feasibility (20 Points)**

Applications must show that establishing or enhancing the capabilities, outputs, and impacts of a proof-of-concept or commercialization program is a likely outcome from i6 Challenge funding. This will be evaluated to the extent an application demonstrates:

- Strategies, tactics, and tasks that leverage regional strengths, mitigate regional weaknesses (including but not limited to a documented negative impact due to trade), capitalize on strategic opportunities and resources, and recognize and address short- and long-term challenges;
- Strategies to provide assistance (technical, business, etc.) to entrepreneurs and innovators at all relevant phases in their development (e.g., via assistance with market assessments, with evaluations of societal and organizational potential, with legal issues (including patent prosecution, technology licensing, legal entity formation, etc.), with financing, or with marketing);
- A reasoned intellectual property strategy that leverages the creative and technological acumen of the projects' or programs' clients (i.e., employees, organizations, existing companies, and new ventures);
- A complete proposed schedule and budget, including clearly defined milestones that are clearly linked to the defined targets and metrics, see Section 5(a)(i)(F) of this FFO;
- The likelihood that milestones will be met;
- Identification of and mitigation strategies that address challenges and risks;
- Strategies, tactics, and tasks to reach out to and include populations that are underrepresented in innovation and entrepreneurship in the proposed primary service area.

### ***C. Personnel & Resources (15 Points)***

Applications will be evaluated in terms of the qualifications of the team, participating organizations, key personnel, and other proposed resources, including:

- The education, experience, and professional accomplishments of key personnel, including but not limited to demonstrated project and program management expertise and success in protecting, licensing, and commercializing intellectual property;
- The adequacy of the applicant's team to carry out the proposed projects or programs and to achieve success (including but not limited to the team's ability to execute projects or programs in communities with populations that are underrepresented in innovation or entrepreneurship in the proposed primary service area);
- The previous performance of the organization or organizations managing and executing components of the programs or projects;
- The extent to which partners (including but not limited to other Federal agencies) contribute or otherwise commit resources (financial or in-kind);
- The appropriateness, quality, and availability of any facilities, materials and resources to be used in implementing the proposed plan; and
- Established or identified access to capital (i.e., financing), in various forms, for early-stage, potentially high-growth companies or otherwise promising entrepreneurs.

### ***D. Community & Regional Infrastructure (15 Points)***

- Letters of support from community partners and resources such as downstream investment sources, commercialization centers, incubators, accelerators, and the general business community;
- The extent of regional partners' (including but not limited to other Federal agencies') participation in and commitment to the program, excluding financial or in-kind commitments used as matching funds; and
- Demonstrated leverage of and cooperation with existing state, local, and nonprofit organization programs and initiatives that create or increase regional capacity innovation and entrepreneurship

(e.g., SBDCs, business incubators, university programs) and other regional resources (e.g., local workforce investment area boards).

#### ***E. Sustainability (10 Points)***

Applications will be evaluated on the applicant organization's plan for sustaining success of the proof-of-concept or commercialization program beyond the period of performance, including:

- Demonstrated adequate financial resources (or demonstrated plans to secure adequate financial resources) both during and after the period of performance to ensure a high probability of success of the proposed projects or programs and of continued success after the grant period;
- A strong potential to become self-sustaining without significant future Federal funding; and
- Long-term, broad, and deep commitments and documented support from private and public sector leaders and from stakeholders throughout the region.

#### ***F. Impact (20 Points)***

Applications must demonstrate the economic development impact (including but not limited to the job creation and private investment impacts) of the proposed proof-of-concept or commercialization program and must include both (i) clear and reasonable outputs and short- and long-term outcomes and (ii) practical and clear tracking and reporting mechanisms for these expected outputs and outcomes of the proposed project or program. See Appendix C for exemplary measures. They will be evaluated to the extent that the application identifies and explains:

- The extent of the target impacts' relevance to the proposed scope of work and the requirements as described in Section 1(b) of the FFO;
- The reasonableness of target impacts (i.e., goals) in light of the application as a whole (including but not limited to the proposed approach, plan, personnel, resources, etc.);
- The strength of the stated methodology to capture, report, and track progress against identified metrics and milestones;
- A reasonable use of available data to drive the development of baselines and the projections of overall impacts and to measure the projects' and programs' impacts in the wider community, region, etc.;
- Quantifiable outputs and outcomes that benefit the regional economy (e.g., measurable metrics via which the extent to which infrastructure for innovation, commercialization, and enterprise formation will be enhanced); and
- The ability of the proposed metrics to measure the extent to which underrepresented populations in the primary service area are engaged by, included in, and served by the programs or projects.

Applicants should consider the output and outcome measures set forth in Appendix C of this FFO.

#### **ii. Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grants**

All applications will be evaluated against the SFS Grants competition evaluation criteria set forth below. EDA will consider applications that include data (including performance measures and deliverables, as applicable) that support the assertions made in the Project Narrative more competitive than those that do not include such supporting data.

## Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grants Scoring

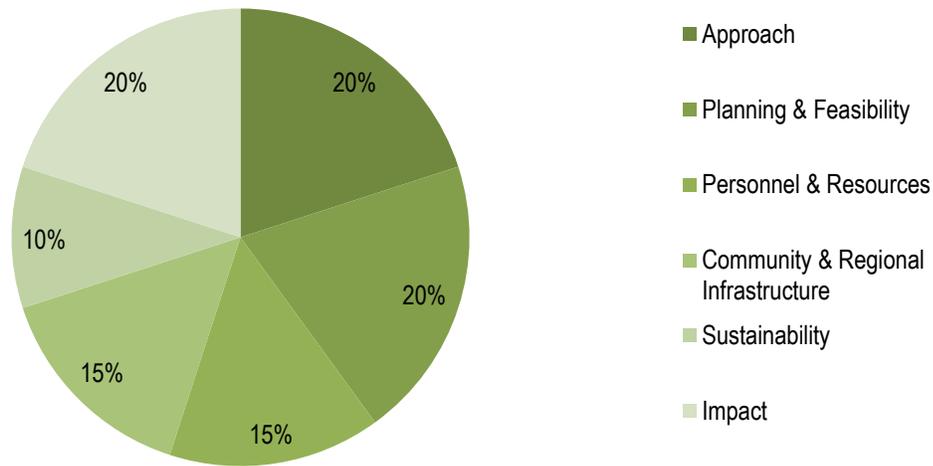


Figure 5-2: Seed Fund Support (SFS) Grants Scoring

### **A. Approach (20 Points)**

Applications will be evaluated based on their plan to effectively use the proposed project as described in Section 1(c) of this FFO to address their regional innovation and entrepreneurial needs. Moreover, the application should present a clear, specific, and realistic approach to provide access to early-stage capital for high-growth companies that plan to bring innovative ideas to the marketplace in areas including but not limited to energy, life sciences, information technology, health care, education, innovative manufacturing, telecommunications, or social innovation.

- A clear understanding of a real, persistent challenge that the region’s entrepreneurs and innovators face regarding access to early-stage capital within one or a set of regional clusters and the timeliness or urgency of the challenge;
- The ability of the proposed seed fund to increase access to early-stage capital;
- The creativity or transformational potential of the seed fund, the role and benefit of the proposed seed fund with respect to the challenge, and the best practices on which the proposed seed fund are based;
- A clear linkage between the proposed seed fund’s activities that create or increase capacity for innovation, entrepreneurship, and the commercialization of ideas and documented, task-oriented milestones;
- An understanding of the region’s populations that are underrepresented in innovation and entrepreneurship in the proposed primary service area and the ability of the seed fund to reach and include those underrepresented populations;
- The strength of the seed fund’s processes and criteria for company selection; and
- The extent to which the seed fund or related, coordinated partner programs provide ongoing evaluation of and technical and business assistance to selected companies.

### ***B. Planning & Feasibility (20 Points)***

Applications must show that establishing or expanding the seed fund and its accompanying programs is a likely outcome from SFS Grant competition funding. This will be evaluated to the extent an application demonstrates:

- Potential investments toward or pathways to full capitalization of the seed fund;
- Outreach to and development, education, and connection of new or expanded sources of seed capital investments (e.g., high-net-worth individuals, investment associations, crowdfunding participants);
- Demonstrated pipeline of potential early-stage investment targets or a comprehensive plan to develop such a pipeline;
- A comprehensive sustainability plan to finance operational costs of the seed fund;
- A comprehensive sustainability plan to serve as a long-term source of investments in early-stage companies in the community, region, or ecosystem; and
- Strategies, tactics, and tasks to reach out to and include underrepresented populations in innovation and entrepreneurship in the proposed primary service area.

### ***C. Personnel & Resources (15 Points)***

Applications will be evaluated in terms of the qualifications of the team, participating organizations, key personnel, and other proposed resources, to the extent a given application demonstrates:

- The education, experience, and professional accomplishments of key personnel, including but not limited to demonstrated success in creating access to or managing capital for startups or other early-stage ventures;
- The adequacy of the applicant's team to carry out the proposed projects or programs and to achieve success;
- The previous performance of the organizations making up the team, as applicable;
- The extent to which partners (including but not limited to other Federal agencies) contribute or otherwise commit resources (financial or in-kind); and
- The appropriateness, quality, and availability of any facilities, materials, and resources to be used in implementing the proposed plan.

### ***D. Community & Regional Infrastructure (15 Points)***

Regional connectivity and an understanding of the relevant community, region, and cluster are essential to the success of a seed fund. This will be evaluated to the extent an application demonstrates:

- Letters of intent to invest or other documentation that demonstrates a high probability of full capitalization of the seed fund;
- Letters of support from community partners and resources, including downstream investment sources, commercialization centers, incubators, accelerators, and the general business community;
- The extent of regional partners' (including but not limited to other Federal agencies') participation in and commitment to the seed fund, excluding financial or in-kind commitments used as matching funds; and
- Demonstrated leverage of and cooperation with existing state, local, and nonprofit organization programs and initiatives that create or increase regional capacity innovation and entrepreneurship

(e.g., SBDCs, business incubators, university programs) and other regional resources (e.g., local workforce investment area boards).

#### ***E. Sustainability (10 Points)***

- Demonstrated adequate financial resources (or demonstrated plans to secure adequate financial resources) both during and after the period of performance to ensure a high probability of success of the proposed projects or programs and of continued success after the grant period;
- A strong potential to become self-sustaining without significant future Federal funding; and
- Long-term, broad, and deep commitments and documented support from private and public sector leaders and from stakeholders throughout the region.

#### ***F. Impact (20 Points)***

Applications must demonstrate the economic development impact (including but not limited to the job creation and private investment impacts) of the proposed seed fund and must include both (i) clear and reasonable outputs and short- and long-term outcomes and (ii) practical and clear tracking and reporting mechanisms for these expected outputs and outcomes of the proposed project or program. See Appendix C for exemplary measures. They will be evaluated to the extent that the application identifies and explains:

- The target impacts' relevance to the proposed scope of work and the requirements as described in Section 1(c) of the FFO;
- The reasonableness of target impacts (i.e., goals) in light of the application as a whole (including but not limited to the proposed approach, plan, personnel, resources, etc.);
- The strength of the stated methodology to capture, report, and track progress against identified metrics and milestones;
- A reasonable use of available data to drive the development of baselines and the projections of overall impacts;
- A reasonable use of available data to measure the seed fund's impacts in the wider community, region, etc.;
- Demonstrated quantifiable benefits to the regional economy, including but not limited to the potential for job creation;
- Practical and clear measurement and reporting mechanisms of outputs and outcomes linked to the objectives of this FFO; and
- The ability of the proposed metrics to measure the extent to which underrepresented populations in innovation and entrepreneurship in the proposed primary service area are engaged by, included in, and served by the seed fund.

Applicants should consider the output and outcome measures set forth in Appendix C of this FFO.

#### **b. Review and Selection Process**

As set forth below, EDA staff will review all applications received to ensure that they are complete and eligible to receive funding.

##### **i. Review for Eligibility and Completeness (Technical Review)**

EDA staff will conduct an eligibility and technical completeness review (the "Technical Review") of all applications received by the application deadline. Applications received from ineligible entities will not be considered for funding. **APPLICATIONS THAT DO NOT CONTAIN ALL FORMS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION LISTED IN SECTION 4(B) OF THIS FFO MAY BE DEEMED NON-RESPONSIVE AND EXCLUDED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION. EDA EXPECTS ALL APPLICANTS TO COMPLETE AND INCLUDE ALL REQUIRED FORMS AND DOCUMENTATION.**

However, EDA, in its sole discretion, may determine that an omission may be rectified or cured easily and quickly and therefore may continue its consideration of the application despite the deficiency. Technical Review will be conducted separately for each competition; an applicant that does not meet the Technical Review requirements for one competition will not be precluded from any other competitions for which it applied, provided the requirements for those competitions are met.

#### **ii. Merit Review Panels**

Merit Review Panels, comprised of at least three Federal employees, will evaluate the applications against the evaluation criteria for the relevant competition enumerated in Section 5(a) of this FFO and award up to 100 points to each application for each competition. Application scores will be determined by each panelist on an individual basis, and the average of the individual scores will produce a panel score. EDA, in its sole discretion, may use a statistical technique to normalize scores across panelists and panels. For each competition, the most highly ranked applications will be recommended to the Grants Officer as the applications that merit consideration for EDA funding.

#### **iii. Grants Officer Decision**

The most highly ranked applications will be forwarded to EDA's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs (DAS/RA), who is the Grants Officer under this announcement. The DAS/RA has been delegated the authority to make the final decision on whether to fund an application and may select a project for funding that differs from the most highly ranked applications based on any of the following Selection Factors or use these Selection Factors to break a tie for applications that are otherwise considered substantially equal in merit:

1. The extent to which the application meets the overall objectives of SWTIA § 27;
2. The ability of a project to start quickly, realistically achieve project goals, and catalyze additional resources;
3. The comparative financial or management capability of the applicant;
4. The applicant's performance under previous Federal financial assistance awards, including whether the grantee submitted required performance reports and data;
5. For previous grantees, the extent to which the application builds upon and creates synergies with previously funded work;
6. For applicants to multiple competitions under this FFO, the extent to which the proposal leverages dollars across the multiple programs to make their overall approach stronger.
7. The availability of program funding;
8. The extent to which the project supports EDA's goals of geographic balance in distribution of program funds, project types, sectoral focus (including but not limited to advanced wood products, advanced manufacturing, bioscience, energy, nanotechnology, telecommunications, etc.), organizational type (including smaller and rural organizations) and the overall portfolio; and
9. The extent to which any technical deficiencies or any budgetary or legal issues in the application may impact an applicant's ability to execute the project or achieve the desired impacts.

The final decision of the DAS/RA must be consistent with EDA's and DOC's published policies. Should the DAS/RA make a selection that differs from the most highly ranked applications, the DAS/RA will document the rationale for the decision in writing.

#### **iv. Federal Awardee Performance Integrity Information System (FAPIS) Review**

EDA, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the

designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS). See 41 U.S.C. § 2313.

Each applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM. EDA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.205.

#### v. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funding, successful applicants should expect to receive grant award notification approximately 120 days from the application closing date set forth in this FFO.

### 6. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

#### a. Federal Award Notices

Under this FFO, EDA expects to notify applicants of its decision in writing within 120 days of the application deadline. If an application is selected for funding, the EDA Grants Officer will issue the signed grant award (Form CD-450), which is the authorizing financial assistance award document and includes the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. A sample Form CD-450 is available at [http://ocio.os.doc.gov/s/groups/public/@doc/@os/@ocio/@oitpp/documents/content/dev01\\_002513.pdf](http://ocio.os.doc.gov/s/groups/public/@doc/@os/@ocio/@oitpp/documents/content/dev01_002513.pdf) and the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (December 2014) are available at [http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants\\_management/policy/documents/DOC\\_Standard\\_Terms\\_12\\_26\\_2014.pdf](http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_12_26_2014.pdf).

By signing Form CD-450, the recipient agrees to comply with all award provisions. EDA will provide Form CD-450 via email through Grants Online, an electronic grants management system. The email will provide the authorized representative with instructions on how to create an account with Grants Online in order to view and sign the award. The recipient must sign and return the Form CD-450 without modification within 30 days of the date of EDA's signature on the form. **Failure to sign and return the CD-450 during this timeframe may be considered grounds for appropriate enforcement action pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.338 ("Remedies for noncompliance"), INCLUDING AWARD TERMINATION.**

If an applicant is awarded funding, neither DOC nor EDA is under any obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with that award or to make any future award(s). Amendment or renewal of an award to increase funding or to extend the period of performance is at the discretion of DOC and EDA.

EDA will provide written notice to all applicants informing them whether their application was selected for funding. EDA will retain unsuccessful applications in accordance with EDA's record retention schedule.

#### b. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

##### i. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements

Recipients of an EDA award will be bound by the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, which are codified at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (Uniform Guidance). The Uniform Guidance streamlines the language from eight existing Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars, including Cost Principles (OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A 122), administrative requirements (OMB Circulars A-102 and A 110), and audit requirements (OMB Circular A-133) into one consolidated set

of guidance applicable to Federal assistance awards. Note that the Uniform Guidance supersedes DOC's Uniform Administrative Requirements set out at 15 C.F.R. Parts 14 and 24. Applicants are advised to familiarize themselves with 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which may be found at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2015-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2015-title2-vol1-subtitleA-chap11.pdf>. Additional information on the substance of and transition to the OMB Uniform Guidance may be found at <https://cfo.gov/cofar/>.

#### **ii. Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions**

The Department of Commerce will apply the Financial Assistance Standard terms and conditions dated December 26, 2014 to this award. The ST&Cs may be accessed at the following website: [http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants\\_management/policy/documents/DOC\\_Standard\\_Terms\\_12\\_26\\_2014.pdf](http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_12_26_2014.pdf).

#### **iii. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements**

The Department of Commerce will apply the Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements dated December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390). The Pre-Award Notice may be accessed at the Government Printing Office (GPO) website at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

### **c. Reporting**

#### **i. Financial, Performance, and Impact Reports**

All recipients are required to submit financial, performance, and impact reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant award, generally no less than semi-annually. All project progress and financial reports must be submitted to the applicable EDA program officer in electronic format. Recipients will be required to provide updates on their progress towards meeting any output and outcome measures identified in their application, as well as any other metrics requested by EDA and identified in the grant special award conditions. Furthermore, recipients will be required to provide economic development impact reports to EDA at the end of the grant performance period, two years after the end of the grant performance period, and five years after the end of the grant performance period. As part of good performance practices, EDA may conduct program evaluations. If so, recipients of grants under this program may need to furnish performance data to evaluators, including but not limited to EDA staff and outside parties contracted by EDA. EDA may also, for research purposes linked to improving economic outcomes, choose to share data with other Federal partners, including but not limited to statistical agencies.

#### **ii. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006**

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at [www.FSRS.gov](http://www.FSRS.gov) on all sub-awards over \$25,000. Please see the OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. Part 170 (2014), which can be accessed at [http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl).

#### **iii. Government Performance and Results Act**

EDA may require that awardees provide EDA additional data on actual impact of the funded investment, pursuant to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), up to nine years after the grant award.

#### iv. Information Sharing

For the purposes of achieving rigorous program evaluations, all applications (including those that are not selected for funding) may be shared with EDA staff, outside parties contracted by EDA for the purposes of evaluation, and other Federal agencies.

#### 7. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

For questions concerning this FFO or for more information about EDA programs, you may contact the appropriate EDA Regional Office RIS Point(s) of Contact (RO RIS POC(s)):

Regional Office	RO RIS POC(s)	Email	Phone
Atlanta	Robin Cooley	<a href="mailto:rcooley@eda.gov">rcooley@eda.gov</a>	(803) 253-3640
Austin	Chris Rys	<a href="mailto:crys@eda.gov">crys@eda.gov</a>	(512) 381-8157
Chicago	Bill Warren	<a href="mailto:wwarren@eda.gov">wwarren@eda.gov</a>	(312) 789-9758
Denver	Justin Fazzari	<a href="mailto:jfazzari@eda.gov">jfazzari@eda.gov</a>	(303) 844-4089
Philadelphia	Chivas Grannum	<a href="mailto:cgrannum@eda.gov">cgrannum@eda.gov</a>	(215) 316-2759
Seattle	Brian Parker	<a href="mailto:bparker2@eda.gov">bparker2@eda.gov</a>	(206) 220-7675

#### 8. OTHER INFORMATION

##### a. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure

The Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 [hereinafter FOIA], and DOC's implementing regulations at 15 C.F.R. Part 4 set forth the rules and procedures to make requested material, information, and records publicly available. Unless prohibited by law and to the extent permitted under FOIA, contents of applications submitted by applicants may be released in response to FOIA requests. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information." Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.

##### b. Past Performance and Non-Compliance with Award Provisions

Unsatisfactory performance under prior Federal awards may result in an application not being considered for funding. Failure to comply with any or all of the provisions of an award may have a negative impact on future funding by DOC (or any of its operating units) may be considered grounds for any or all of the following actions: (1) establishing an account receivable; (2) withholding payments to the recipient under any DOC award(s); (3) changing the method of payment from advance to reimbursement only; (4) imposing other special award conditions; (5) suspending any active DOC award(s); and (6) terminating any active DOC award(s).

##### c. Restrictions Governing Making Grants to Corporations Convicted of Felony Criminal Violations and/or Unpaid Federal Tax Liabilities

In accordance with current Federal appropriations law, execution by an applicant of the Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law (see Appendix A) will be required in a format requested by EDA before any award will be made under this FFO.

##### d. EDA's Non-Relocation Policy

Applicants are advised that, should an application be selected for award, the recipient will be required to adhere to a special award condition relating to EDA's non-relocation policy as follows:

In signing this award of financial assistance, Recipient(s) attests that EDA funding is not intended by the Recipient to assist its efforts to induce the relocation of existing jobs within the U.S. that are located outside of its jurisdiction to within its jurisdiction in competition with other U.S. jurisdictions for those same jobs. In the event that EDA determines that its assistance was used for those purposes, EDA retains the right to pursue appropriate enforcement action in accord with the Standard Terms and Conditions of the Award, including suspension of disbursements and termination of the award for convenience or cause, which may include the establishment of a debt requiring the Recipient to reimburse EDA.

For purposes of ensuring that EDA assistance will not be used to merely transfer jobs from one location in the United States to another, each applicant must inform EDA of all employers that constitute primary beneficiaries of the project assisted by EDA. EDA will consider an employer to be a “primary beneficiary” if the applicant estimates that such employer will create or save 100 or more permanent jobs as a result of the investment assistance, provided that such employer also is specifically named in the application as benefiting from the project, or is or will be located in an EDA-assisted building, port, facility, or industrial, commercial, or business park constructed or improved in whole or in part with investment assistance prior to EDA’s final disbursement of funds. In smaller communities, EDA may extend this policy to the relocation of 50 or more jobs.

#### **e. Audit Requirements**

Single or program-specific audits shall be performed in accordance with the requirements contained in the OMB Uniform Guidance (see 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F, “Audit Requirements”). The OMB Uniform Guidance requires any non-Federal entity (e.g., nonprofit organizations, including nonprofit institutions of higher education and hospitals; States; local governments; and Indian Tribes) that expends Federal awards of \$750,000 or more in the recipient’s fiscal year to conduct a single or program-specific audit in accordance with the requirements set out in the OMB Uniform Guidance. Applicants are reminded that EDA or the DOC’s Office of Inspector General also may conduct an audit of an award at any time.

#### **f. Environmental and Historic Preservation Requirements**

Applications may be reviewed by EDA for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), depending on the nature and specific elements of each given application. During the NEPA review process, applicants may be instructed to contact the designated State and/or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO/THPO), provide approvals from other governmental agencies, or provide more detailed environmental information. EDA, after compliance with requirements for consultation with Federally recognized Indian Tribes, may require applicants to participate in Tribal consultation, as necessary. The implementing regulations of NEPA require EDA to provide public notice of the availability of project-specific environmental documents, such as environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, findings of no significant impact, and records of decision, to the affected public.<sup>14</sup> For further guidance and information, please contact the representative listed in Section 7 of this FFO.

#### **g. Instructions for Application Submission via Grants.gov**

##### **i. Register Early and Submit Early**

In order to submit an application through <http://www.grants.gov/> (Grants.gov), an applicant must register for a Grants.gov user ID and password. Note that this process can take between **THREE TO FIVE BUSINESS DAYS** or **AS LONG AS FOUR WEEKS** if all steps are not completed correctly. To avoid delays, EDA strongly recommends that applicants start early and not wait until the approaching deadline date before logging in, registering, reviewing the application instructions, and applying. Information about the Grants.gov registration process for organizations can be found at

---

<sup>14</sup> As specified in 40 C.F.R. §1506.6(b).

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>. Please note that organizations already registered with Grants.gov do not need to re-register; however, all registered organizations must keep their System for Award Management (SAM), which includes the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database, registration up-to-date through sam.gov or their applications will not be accepted by Grants.gov.

## ii. AOR Requirement

Applicants must register as organizations, not as individuals. As part of the registration process, you will register at least one Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) for your organization. **THE AOR(S) MUST BE A PERSON OR PERSONS WHO HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE DOCUMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE ENTITY MAKING APPLICATION.** AORs registered at Grants.gov are the only officials with the authority to submit applications at Grants.gov; please **ensure that your organization's application is submitted by an AOR.** **IF THE APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED BY ANYONE OTHER THAN YOUR ORGANIZATION'S AOR, IT WILL BE REJECTED BY THE GRANTS.GOV SYSTEM AND CANNOT BE CONSIDERED BY EDA.** Note that a given organization may designate multiple individuals as AORs for Grants.gov purposes.

EDA will not accept late submissions caused by Grants.gov registration issues, including SAM, CCR, and AOR issues.

Once an applicant is registered, the following list provides step-by-step instructions for accessing, completing, and submitting an application via Grants.gov. Please also read the instructions posted at Grants.gov.

1. Ensure that you have installed a compatible version of Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer, as incompatible versions of Adobe Acrobat Reader may cause errors. See <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/troubleshooting/verifying-adobe-reader.html>. Navigate to <http://www.grants.gov/> and select "Apply for Grants" from the left-hand menu.
2. Under the "Applicants" tab, choose "Apply for Grants"; on the next page, click the "Get Application Package" button.
3. Enter Funding Opportunity Number "EDA-HDQ-OIE-2016-2004868" and click "Search."
4. Click on the "Select Package" link under the "Actions" column for the instructions and application specific to the type of project and EDA program under which you are applying.
5. A new page should pop up. On that page, enter your email address (in order to receive updates about this funding opportunity) or check the box that indicates that you do not wish to provide it, then click "Submit."
6. Click "Download Application Instructions" to review the instructions posted on Grants.gov, and click on "Download Application Package" when you are ready to begin the application.
7. Save the applicable application package to your computer or network drive. Note that the package file can be shared among multiple users; however, each user must have a compatible version of Adobe Acrobat Reader installed in order to save changes to the application package.
8. Click on the hyperlink to each required form in the "Mandatory Documents" box in order to navigate to that form to complete it.
9. To add "Optional Documents" to the application, click on the checkboxes next to the form name on the first page of the application package. Form SF-LLL is required and must be completed by all applicants regardless of whether non-Federal funds have been or are planned to be used for lobbying in connection with this competitive solicitation; in situations where no non-

Federal funds have been or are planned to be used in such a manner, applicants must still submit Form SF-LLL but may indicate that it is not applicable. If you will be submitting your application via Grants.gov, also check the box next to “Attachments.” The Attachments form allows applicants to attach any documents required as attachments under this competitive solicitation, such as a CEDS, documentation of commitment of match, or letters of support.

10. The application package should prepopulate with all selected forms embedded. Complete all mandatory fields (highlighted in yellow) on the forms. Note that mandatory fields will vary based on the type of applicant and the type of assistance sought. On Form CD-511, type “not awarded yet” in the “project number” field. Save the application package at regular intervals to avoid losing work.
11. Attach any required attachments. The preferred file format for attachments is portable document format (PDF); however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Excel formats.
12. When all mandatory fields have been completed, scroll to the top and click on “Check Package for Errors.”
13. Click “Save.”
14. Click “Save and Submit.” At this point the applicant’s AOR must be connected to the Internet and will be asked to enter their Grants.gov user ID and password in order to submit via Grants.gov. As noted above, an AOR must submit the application for it to be validated by Grants.gov and received by EDA.

### iii. Field Limitations and Special Characters

Please be advised that Grants.gov provides the following notice with respect to form field limitations and special characters:

#### ***A. Are There Restrictions on File Names for Any Attachment I Include with My Application Package?***

Please limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (e.g., &, -, \*, %, /, #) in attachment names and application form fields (including periods (.), blank spaces, and accent marks (e.g., á, ä, à)) or attach documents with the same name. An underscore (e.g., as in `my_Attached_File.pdf`) may be used to separate words within a file name. Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application may be rejected.

#### ***B. What Kind of Information Can Be Entered into Form Fields Within My Application?***

Grants.gov application packages offer fields to enter a set amount of data. When the limit is reached for a certain field, you will no longer be able to enter data into that field. For every form, there are different limitations to the data that you are allowed to enter (this varies between agency and form). Refer to the agency instructions available for download with the application package for more detail.

Do not use special characters (e.g., &, -, \*, %, /, #) within the application form fields including periods (.), blank spaces, and accent marks (e.g., á, ä, à); an underscore ( ) may be used. Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application may be rejected.

In EDA’s experience, use of apostrophes (e.g., ’, \, `) in file names and fillable fields of required forms has resulted in application submission issues. Accordingly, please periodically check the status of your application to make sure it has been validated, and use file naming conventions that do not negatively affect your application submission.

If a response exceeds the field limit requirements of any form, including Form ED-900, the applicant is advised to include the response as an attachment to the application. The applicant should check the “Attachments” checkbox under “Optional Documents for Submission” box in the application package, and clearly indicate in the form field that the information is included as an electronic file.

#### **iv. Verify That Your Submission Was Successful**

Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at Grants.gov. Applicants can expect to receive multiple emails regarding the status of their submission. Since email communication can be unreliable, applicants must proactively check on the status of their application if they do not receive email notifications within a day of submission.

An applicant should expect to receive two initial emails from Grants.gov: the first will confirm receipt of the application, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to EDA or has been rejected due to errors. Because it can take up to two business days after Grants.gov receives an application for applicants to receive email notification of an error, applicants should time their submissions to allow for application correction and resubmission by the deadline. Applicants will receive a third email once EDA has retrieved their applications.

EDA requests that applicants kindly refrain from submitting multiple copies of the same application package. Applicants should save and print both the confirmation screen provided on the Grants.gov website after the applicant has submitted an application, and the confirmation email sent by Grants.gov when the application has been successfully received and validated in the system. If an applicant receives an email from Grants.gov indicating that the application was received and subsequently validated, but does not receive an email from Grants.gov indicating that EDA has retrieved the application package within 72 hours of that email, the applicant may contact the representative listed in Section 7 of this announcement to inquire if EDA is in receipt of the applicant’s submission.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to verify that its submission was timely received and validated successfully at Grants.gov. To see the date and time your application was received, log on to Grants.gov and click on the “Track My Application” link from the left hand menu. For a successful submission, the application must be received and validated by Grants.gov, and an agency tracking number assigned. If the date and time your application is validated and timestamped by Grants.gov is later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the, your application is late. If your application has a status of “Received” it is awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will change to “Validated” or “Rejected with Errors.” If the status is “Rejected with Errors,” your application has not been received successfully. For more detailed information about why an application may be rejected, please see “Troubleshooting Tips” at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/troubleshooting.html>.

#### **v. Grants.gov Systems Issues**

If you experience a Grants.gov systems issue (i.e., a technical problem or glitch with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before the deadline, please (i) print any error message received; (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at (800) 518-4726 for immediate assistance; and (iii) contact EDA using the contact information in Section 7 of this FFO prior to the deadline for receipt of applications. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov. Please note that problems with an applicant organization’s computer system or equipment are **not** considered systems issues. Similarly, an applicant’s failure to, e.g., (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered AOR submits the application, or (iii) notice receipt of an email

message from Grants.gov are **not** considered systems issues. A Grants.gov systems issue is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov itself, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely. In the event of a confirmed systems issue, EDA reserves the right to accept an application in an alternate format; however, all applications must be received by the deadline. Late applications will not be accepted.

Applicants should access the following link for assistance in navigating Grants.gov and for a list of useful resources: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>. The following link lists frequently asked questions (FAQs): <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/general-support/faqs.html>. If you do not find an answer to your question under the “Applicant FAQs,” try consulting the “Applicant User Guide” or contacting Grants.gov by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) or telephone at (800) 518-4726. The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**APPENDIX A: REPRESENTATION BY CORPORATIONS REGARDING AN UNPAID DELINQUENT TAX LIABILITY OR A FELONY CONVICTION UNDER ANY FEDERAL LAW**

In accordance with current Federal appropriations law, none of the appropriated funds made available by relevant appropriations Acts may be used to issue a financial assistance award to any corporation that:

- was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, unless any agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interest of the Government; and/or,
- has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, unless an agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interest of the Government.

For purposes of the below certification, a corporation is defined as an entity that has filed articles of incorporation in one of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, or the various territories of the United States including American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Midway Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. (Note that this includes both for-profit and non-profit organizations.)

The below certification is required for all new financial assistance awards, and for all amendments to existing financial assistance awards, that are made to corporations (as defined above) and that are funded with appropriated funds made available to the Department of Commerce pursuant to relevant appropriations Acts. This certification is further required to the extent that other appropriation Acts contain the same or substantively similar prohibitions against the issuance of financial assistance awards to certain corporations.

Instructions: All recipients that are corporations (as defined above) must complete paragraphs (1) and (2) below, which must be signed below by an authorized representative of the corporation. Recipients that are not corporations are not required to complete this representation.

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ [insert name of corporation] certifies that it is  is not  (check one) a corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under a Federal law within the 24 months preceding the signature date of this Representation.

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ [insert name of corporation] certifies that it is  is not  (check one) a corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

[Typed name and title of the signing individual]

[Typed phone number of the signing individual]

[Typed email address of the signing individual]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: TECHNOLOGY READINESS LEVELS SCALE

Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) Scale to Be Applied by EDA Grantees		
TRL Level	Definition	Questions to Be Answered and Reported
1	Basic principles observed and reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What research has been conducted, where, when, and by whom?</li> <li>• What research papers and publications have reported the results?</li> </ul>
2	Technology concept and/or application formulated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What research has been conducted, where, when, and by whom?</li> <li>• What research papers and publications have reported possible applications?</li> </ul>
3	Proof-of-concept validated through experiment or analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What research has been conducted, where, when, and by whom?</li> <li>• What test results have been reported?</li> <li>• How do they compare to analytical predictions?</li> </ul>
4	Component and/or system/sub-system validated in a relevant laboratory environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What research has been conducted, where, when, and by whom?</li> <li>• What are the results of component/sub-system tests in laboratory setting?</li> </ul>
5	Component and/or system/sub-system validated in a relevant commercial environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the results of testing a complete system in a simulated operational environment?</li> <li>• How do the test results compare with expectations?</li> <li>• What problems, if any, were encountered? Was the system/sub-system refined to match expected system goals?</li> </ul>
6	System/subsystem prototype demonstrated in a relevant laboratory environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the results of testing a complete system/prototype at required specifications?</li> <li>• How did the test compare with expectations?</li> <li>• What problems were encountered?</li> <li>• What are the plans or actions to resolve problems?</li> </ul>
7	System/subsystem prototype demonstrated in a commercial environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the results from testing a prototype system in an operational environment?</li> <li>• How did the test compare with expectations?</li> <li>• What problems were encountered?</li> <li>• What are the plans or actions to resolve problems?</li> </ul>
8	Actual system completed and qualified through testing and demonstration in a commercial setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the results of testing the system in its final configuration in a commercial setting?</li> <li>• Did it meet its operational requirements? What problems were encountered?</li> <li>• What are the plans or actions to resolve problems?</li> </ul>
9	Actual system proven through successful operation in a commercial setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the results of operating the technology in a commercial setting, using standard process metrics?</li> </ul>

## **APPENDIX C: EXEMPLARY OUTPUT AND OUTCOME MEASURES**

Applications for both competitions under this FFO will be evaluated on their approaches to measuring activities, outputs, and outcomes. See, e.g., Sections 5(a)(i)(F), 5(a)(ii)(F). Applicants are encouraged to consider a broad range of relevant output and outcome measures in developing their proposed scope of work. Examples of such output and outcome measures include the following:

### **1. Exemplary Output Measures:**

- Number of events (such as networking or mentoring sessions) held;
- Number of boot camps held;
- Number of new facilities established;
- Number of technologies licensed or commercialized;
- Number of patents which gained government approval;
- Number of Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) proposals supported;
- Number of participants gaining new certifications or degrees;
- Number of participants with new partnerships; or
- Number of loans obtained
- Number of investors in each seed fund investment round

### **2. Exemplary Outcome Measures:**

- Number of new Angel investments or Venture Capital investments in supported firms;
- Number of new firms developed;
- Number of new products launched by participants;
- Percent of participants reporting new skills acquired from events or boot camps;
- Percent of participants reporting using new skills to support continued activities; or
- Percent of participants reporting new or increased exports
- Number of jobs supported by seed fund investments
- Percent investment return on sale, exit, initial public offering

**APPENDIX D: OPTIONAL CHECKLIST-STYLE GUIDE FOR REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

**1. For States, Indian Tribes, Cities, and Other Political Subdivisions of States**

The following checklist table is meant to assist applicants that are States, Indian tribes, cities, and other political subdivisions of cities (including consortia of one or more of these types of entities). As set forth in Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO, all documents are required for a complete application.

Note that this list **DOES NOT APPLY** to nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, public-private partnerships, science or research parks, Federal laboratories, or economic development or similar organizations. For these organizations, see Section 2 of Appendix D of this FFO.

<b>Document Checklist for States, Indian Tribes, Cities, and Other Political Subdivisions of States</b>		<b>Checklist for Applicants/Co-Applicants, as Applicable</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Title/Description/Requirements</b>	<b>Applicant 1</b>	<b>Applicant 2</b>	<b>Applicant 3</b>
<b>Form SF-424 (with UEI from SAM)</b>	Application for Federal Assistance			
<b>Form SF-424A</b>	Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs			
<b>Form SF-424B</b>	Assurances-Non-Construction Programs			
<b>Form CD-511</b>	Certification Regarding Lobbying			
<b>Form SF-LLL</b>	Disclosure of Lobbying Activities			
<b>Project Narrative</b>	See Section 4(b)(iii) of this FFO			
<b>Résumés</b>	See Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO			
<b>Budget Narrative with Staffing Plan</b>	See Section 4(b)(iv) of this FFO			
<b>Commitment Letters or Equivalent</b>	See Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO			
<b>Comments from the State Clearinghouse</b>	See <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc">http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc</a>			
<b>Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreement</b>	See Section 4(b)(ii) of this FFO			

**2. For Nonprofit Organizations, Institutions of Higher Education, Public-Private Partnerships, Science or Research Parks, Federal Laboratories, Economic Development or Similar Organizations**

The following checklist table is meant to assist applicants that are nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, public-private partnerships, science or research parks, Federal laboratories, or economic development or similar organizations (as well as consortia that include one or more of these types of entities). As set forth in Section 4(c)(i) of this FFO, all documents are required for a complete application.

<b>Document Checklist for Nonprofit Organizations, Institutions of Higher Education, Public-Private Partnerships, Science or Research Parks, Federal Laboratories, Economic Development or Similar Organizations</b>		<b>Checklist for Applicants/Co-Applicants, as Applicable</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Title/Description/Requirements</b>	<b>Applicant 1</b>	<b>Applicant 2</b>	<b>Applicant 3</b>
<b>Form SF-424 (with UEI from SAM)</b>	Application for Federal Assistance			
<b>Form SF-424A</b>	Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs			
<b>Form SF-424B</b>	Assurances-Non-Construction Programs			
<b>Form CD-511</b>	Certification Regarding Lobbying			
<b>Form SF-LLL</b>	Disclosure of Lobbying Activities			
<b>Project Narrative</b>	See Section 4(b)(iii) of this FFO			
<b>Résumés</b>	See Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO			
<b>Budget Narrative with Staffing Plan</b>	See Section 4(b)(iv) of this FFO			
<b>Commitment Letters or Equivalent</b>	See Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO			
<b>Comments from the State Clearinghouse</b>	See <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc">http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc</a>			
<b>Certificate of Good Standing</b>	See Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO			
<b>Articles of Incorporation</b>	See Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO			
<b>Bylaws</b>	See Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO			
<b>Demonstration of Government Support</b>	See Section 4(b)(i) of this FFO			
<b>Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreement</b>	See Section 4(b)(ii) of this FFO			